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STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

(THE COMPLEXITY OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS – IN THE VOLATILE, UNCERTAIN, COMPLEX, AND AMBIGUOUS WORLD)

BY

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ABSTRACT

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This paper will examine changes in the military, society, and international security environment as they pertain to civilmilitary cooperation and understanding. The intent is to make recommendations to military leaders on how to increase cooperation and understanding between our elected officials and the military. The United States is at a crossroads where it must begin to take steps toward reducing the gap between government officials and its society. Former Secretary of Defense, McNamara believed that civilians, not military services, should link policy with military strategy and even force structure. In today's world and under the resource constraints the military is now experiencing this is true. The issue is: how do we articulate national and military strategy that will be supported by Congress? This paper is an attempt at how to look at the current issues and develop some recommendations on how to bring civilian and military leaders together.

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PREFACE

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Civil-Military Relations In a VUCA World

I. Introduction:

This paper will examine changes in the military, society, and international security environment as they pertain to civilmilitary cooperation and understanding. The intent is to make recommendations to military leaders on how to increase cooperation and understanding between our elected officials and the military. The democratic style of government we have become so accustomed to over the last 223 years is at a crossroads. The necessity at this juncture is to strengthen civil-military relations or to face a degradation of civilmilitary relations. The road our leaders take will have an enormous impact on the future of our government. Most leaders do not yet see the significance of this crossroads because of politics and selfish ambition. The indicators are small when taken in isolation, but when examined in their totality their synergy can be catastrophic. The crossroads deals with new civil-military relationships caused by changes in the military, social, and the international security environment.

Most of these changes have been gradual, but with the implosion of the Soviet Union ending the Cold War, the changes have gained momentum. The military changes started over 25 years ago with the adoption of an all-volunteer force. There

were many questions about what effect an all-volunteer force would have and just now some of its ramifications are being felt. Additionally, a significant change took place in the military during the same time frame when women were allowed in the Army. There are numerous other changes that have affected civil - military relations that will be addressed throughout this paper.

Societal changes again have been gradual. The change in family structure, liberalization of morals and ethics, and removal of the obligation to serve in a military service have all affected how the military service relates to and affects society. The Vietnam era generation created a gap between those who could afford to skip the draft because of college deferments and those who could or did not. Many of those who avoided military service believed more in individual rights and self-gratification rather than selfless service.

Generation X (70% of today's all-volunteer force) are those people born between 1965-1977. Many of them have grown up in unstable family environments, glued to television or computer monitors. The stereotype is that they do not exercise, and do ask "what's in it for me?" These success-oriented individualists are distrustful of large institutions and have situational ethics. By situational ethics we mean no hard standards. They rationalize their situation and apply ethics that benefit

themselves rather than society or the group they represent. The services, however, have done a reasonable job recruiting and training these individualists and bridging the gap between their values and the military's needs to some degree.

We have had an explosion in numbers of immigrants coming into America, and their perceptions of the military from their home countries are of corruption and authoritarian establishments. They have no sense of service or patriotism.

These new Americans must also become a focal point for teaching what it means to be part of the United States.

Additionally, the final source of societal change involves racial, ethic, and gender-related turmoil. The mental adjustment to women in the Army has been difficult but seems to be subsiding as the army has observed their superior performance over the last 10 years. Everyone realizes that the Services could not perform their mission now without them. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Henry H. Shelton, put it this way: "The fact of the matter is that we simply could not do our mission today without the women who volunteer to serve their country. We need their talent, we need their numbers, and we need their leadership. There simply is no alternative."²

The international security environment has drastically changed in the last 10 years. The collapse of the Soviet Union left the United States with no significant threat. This lack of

threat has caused Congress to ask questions. What do we need a large standing Army for? What is our national military strategy? Why do we need to spend \$260 billion on defense when we could spend it on domestic issues will help American citizens? All these issues put strains on civil - military relations, which ultimately could have a dramatic impact on our democratic form of government.

II. Civil - Military Relations

Civil - military relations comprise the relationships

between Congress, Presidential appointees and military leaders.

Understanding the relationships between Congress, Presidential appointees and military leaders requires one to start with the Constitution, which describes that relationship. The founding fathers of the United States wanted to ensure that there was a balance of power in American government. The balance between the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches would ensure that no one individual or single group could make decisions without approval of the other. The Constitution, Article I, Section 8, clearly states that "Congress has the right to declare war... To raise and support Armies, ... To provide and maintain a Navy" ...and in that light placed the military leaders under civilian supremacy and ultimately control.

Civilian supremacy, for the purpose of this paper, can be defined as the statutory authority given to Congress in the Constitution. Civilian control, on the other hand, is the amount of management the President or his designated representative and Congress applies in the day to day operations of the military. Civilian control has no legal basis in the Constitution, but is an implied task. The amount of civilian control can be directly related to the confidence our civilian leaders have in our military leaders' ability to meet political

objectives and to manage the resources given to them by Congress.

Since the 1800s, military leaders have questioned the issue of civilian control, but have never doubted that civilian leadership has the statutory authority to direct the military. One of the first military officers to question military control in the United States was General Emory Upton. He believed that civilian controls over the military were flawed⁴. Upton argued that once military operations commenced, political leaders should back out and let the military handle the situation. This attitude became more evident since WW II and culminated in the relieving of General Douglas MacAuthur of command in Korea.

The complexities of today's strategic environment make it necessary to ensure that military objectives accomplish the political objectives. In today's world, Clausewitz's maxim regarding the war as politics by other means is even truer than it was during the Napoleonic period⁵. General Douglas MacArthur, when called back from retirement in 1950, failed to realize that war as he knew it had changed. Total war was no longer possible because of nuclear weapons and the possibility of retaliation. Total war as MacAuthur knew it was no longer a feasible. The concept of "no substitute for victory" no longer applied. President Truman saw MacAuthur's objectives to be in direct contradiction to the political objectives and his political

control. President Truman relieved MacArthur because he failed to submit fully to civilian control. The tension over civilian control was again raised during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962. The issue was between the Chief of Naval Operations, George Anderson, and Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara:

McNamara had been spending time at the operational headquarters of the blockade, and the naval officers were irked at what they considered his interference. The secretary insisted on making detailed decisions about the operation of the blockade line, without regard to standard procedure or the chain of command. Friction mounted. McNamara then noticed that a single U.S. destroyer was standing outside the blockade line and asked Anderson what it was doing there. The secretary was anxious to make clear that the President did not want to harass any Soviet ships and wanted to allow the Russians to be able to stand off or retreat without humiliation. Anderson was reluctant to answer because some of the civilians in the secretary's party were not cleared for highly sensitive information, but be drew McNamara aside and explained that the ship was sitting on top of a Russian submarine.

The final blowup came when McNamara demanded to know what the navy would do if a Soviet ship refused to divulge its cargo. Anderson brandished the Manual of Navy Regulations in McNamara's face and shouted, "It's all in there." The Secretary retorted, "I don't give a damn what John Paul Jones would have done. I want to know what you are going to do, now." Finally, Anderson replied, "Now, Mr. Secretary, if you and your deputy will go back to your offices, the Navy will run the blockade." Within less than a year, Anderson was removed from his post.

The issue of civilian control of the military continued through Vietnam. President Johnson wanted to ensure civilians regained control. Secretary of defense McNamara believed that civilians,

not military services, should link policy with military strategy and even force structure. 8

Congress passed several acts that attempted to give them control through statutory laws. The first major act attempting to establish laws giving civilian control over the military was the National Security Act of 1947. It was amended in 1949 and again in 1958. The National Security Act of 1947 and its amendments were attempts at strengthening civilian control over the military, but in fact they had an opposite effect. They created a huge bureaucracy that consisted of the armed services, the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Atomic Energy Commission. Additionally, these agencies began to link themselves to civilian industries and labor movements that perpetuated themselves. This complex organization had no real counterbalance. Congress, in passing the National Security Act of 1947, had actually created an organization whose momentum it could no longer control. The Defense budget became disproportionate to other domestic requirements.

The latest Defense Reorganization Act, Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986, significantly altered the Department of Defense. In passing the Goldwater-Nichols Act (GNA) Congress intended:

- (1) to reorganize the Department of Defense and strengthen civilian authority with in the Department;
- (2) to improve the military advice provided to the president, the NSC, and the Secretary of Defense;
- (3) to place clear responsibility on the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands for the accomplishment of missions assigned to those commanders;
- (4) to ensure that the authority of the commanders of the unified and specified combatant commands is fully commensurate with the responsibility of those commanders for the accomplishment of missions assigned to their commands;
- (5) to increase attention to the formulation of strategy and to contingency planning;
- (6) to provide for more efficient use of defense resources;
 - (7) to improve joint officer management policies; and
- (8) to enhance otherwise the effectiveness of military operations and improve the management of administration of the Department of Defense. 10

The GNA restored civilian control over the huge military bureaucracy. It has driven the four military services toward a more unified-armed force. "The Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Staff, and the combatant commands, and the services are arriving at a balanced relationship in which civilian authority is supreme." 11

III. Understanding the Growing Gap in Military Experience

The elimination of the Draft in 1973 has caused a tremendous attitude change toward military service. This attitude change started with those elitists who, during Vietnam, did not have to serve their country because of college deferments. The underling assumption of those deferments may be that some lives are worth more than others. Those who worked on higher education did not have to serve in war (Vietnam). type of work soldiers do may be below their stature. "Think of the disproportionate loss to society, the logic goes, if a future Albert Einstein or Thomas Edison is killed in some fruitless foreign engagement. Or, as an old Chinese saying used to put it, 'one should never use good steel for nails or good men for soldiers.'" These elites have lost their sense of service to our country and its ideals. It is interesting to note that Harvard lost 691 alumni in World War II, but in Vietnam it lost 12 out of all the classes from 1962 to 1972. 13 This elite's attitude has continued for the last 25 years. Now there are few people in private business or government who can relate to military issues. There is no common reference. According to former Secretary of the Navy James H. Web, these elitist groups fall into three categories.

Some, I should say many, do have a sympathy and respect for what you (military service personal) do. But with a few exceptions they lack a reference point -- in their own experience, among their peers and in their families -- to place what you are doing in an understandable context. A Second category, despite their public rhetoric, view you to be merely firemen and policemen of a different order, hired for a job, however dangerous, and expected to do it without complaint. This notion was reinforced during the Gulf War, when the Bush Administration often pointed out with pride that the war wasn't costing the United States anything, because other countries were footing the bill. What does it make you when a national leader places your wartime service in the context of a bill of services rendered? And finally, there is a small but very powerful minority that believes you are dangerous, that you must be continually humiliated and subdued, the militarism is an American disease, that more empowered and respected you become, the more you threaten pet political issues are even the fabric of society. Do not underestimate these people. Despite the absurdity of their views they are intelligent, well positioned at the power centers of our culture, and intent on marginalizing your sacrifices. 14

This lack of understanding toward the military does not stop with political leaders. The military is losing touch with society. The military is becoming more conservative. The evidence is sketchy, but based on a number of formal and informal officer surveys conduct at the service academies, Quantico, and the Command and General Staff College, officers do not view themselves as representatives of society but a unique element within society. The services believe they should have higher standards morally and ethically than society. The all-volunteer force that believes it is different from the society it represents can be dangerous to a democracy. A military force

must have representation from across society or it will eventually be different.

The public is losing its understanding of military requirements as the military get smaller. This issue has been magnified even more with the elimination of the draft. The public has no common reference point which to gage military requirements. The military is beginning to lose touch with the society because of the lack of exposure to the people. The military is becoming more of a mercenary force rather than a force made up of relatives and friends. This lack of direct or indirect knowledge of military causes friction between government leaders, public, and the military themselves.

A recent example of this lack of a common reference effected one of the Air Forces top Generals, General Ralston. General Ralston did not get the nomination as Chairman of the Joint Staff because allegation of adultery. His alleged misconduct was compared to Major Flinn's sexual misconduct charges when in fact there is no legal comparison at all. Major Flinn's misconduct involved a servicewoman husband who complained to the chain of command. This clearly affected the moral and discipline of the unit. In contrast, General Ralston's alleged misconduct took place while he was legally separated from his wife and involved a women outside the military. These are clearly two different circumstances. However, Senate

Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss, who has never served in the military, considered these two incidents the same and forced one of the Air Force's top officer from the service. 16

This growing gap reaches all over America. It begins in homes where no fathers, uncles, brothers or sisters have served; in the schools were few if any teachers can describe what being in the military means; in businesses, radio and television personnel cannot relate to a service person's plight. This chasm is growing day by day and if we don't recognize it and develop ways to inculcate an appreciation of the military in our young, the military will become nothing but mercenaries in the eyes of Americans.

The military itself contributes to this growing gap when it cannot quantify its requirements. In a time of limited resources, Congress and the American people have a right to know that their tax money is being used efficiently. Right now,

Congress has no confidence in the senior military leaders and their ability to identify requirements. Since 1991, the Army

Chiefs of Staff have continually drawn a line in the sand where they believe the Army will break. General Vuono said, the Army cannot go below 580,000; General Sullivan said, the Army cannot go below personnel strength of 535,000; and General Reimer says, the Army cannot go below 480,000 today. The Army is not broken and continues to

perform more missions each and every day. How can the Army leaders have credibility with Congress with this track record? It cannot! That is why Congress is pushing for more control. It is human nature: the less confidence you have in a person or organization, the more control you want to ensure operations are going in the direction you want. Military leaders must reestablish their credibility in order to reduce the amount of civilian control placed on the services. Credibility equals less control.

The general public and a large number of government leaders do not understand that to be a world power and to maintain world order there is a significant cost in dollars and manpower.

Congress must understand this formula if they are to provide resources appropriately. If we consider ourselves first among equals or a world superpower that vision will help determine how big our military budget should be. Some newer Congressmen conceptually see the Defense Department as equal to other departments such as the Department of Agriculture, the

Department of Commerce or the Department of Energy. This would be true if there were no need for priorities or vital interest.

Leaders must recognize that protecting the nation's vital interests are different from other governmental functions if they are to distribute resources appropriately. However, this is not to say military budgets should be disproportionate to all

other federal expenditures. Additionally, Congress needs to have a basic understanding of military capabilities and limitations. This knowledge will allow them to use military force application appropriately. "The common defense does not require an American force for every conceivable contingency, however remote, nor does it require an endless arms race of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons." Our political leaders must understand that intervention and engagement in today's environment will find us constantly at war.

IV. Congressional Lack of Experience

Tables 1 and 2 show the decline in Congressional experience in the military. Table 1 indicates that in 1998 we are closer to the pre WWII statistics. It is interesting to note that the current level of experience in Congress is similar to that of the experience level in Congress just prior to WWII. There can be no evidence drawn from this chart that would lead one to believe the lack of experience in Congress has a negative or positive effect on the nation.

		T	ABLE 1			,
	Non- Veterans	Veterans	Tota	%Veteran	Served Durin Time o Conflic	%Serve During Tim of Conflic
1941						
Representatives	28	15	43	34.	10	23.
Senators	6	2	9	28.	1	16.
Total	35	17	53	33.	11	21.
1945						
Representatives	27	16	43	37.	11	25.
Senators	6	2	9	30.	1	19.
Total	34	19	53	35.	12	24.
1955						
Representatives	17	26	43	59.	22	51.
Senators	3	5	9	59.	5	53.
Total 1965	21	31	53	59.	27	51.
Representatives	13	29	43	68.	26	61.
Senators	4	5	10	59.	5	51.
Total 1975	17	35	53	66.	31	59.
Representatives	13	30	43	69.	24	55.
Senators	3	7	10	70.	5	57.
Total 1985	16	37	53	69.	29	55.
Representatives	21	21	43	50.	15	35.
Senators	2	7	10	74.	4	45.
Total 1995	24	29	53	54.	20	37.
Representatives	29	14	43	3	2	6.
Senators	5	4	10	4	1	15.
Total	35	18	53	7	4	. 21.

Table 2 shows the decline in the number of veterans in the general population. As this number decreases, the more isolated the military is from society.

	TABL	E 2	
	Total Adult Male	Total Male Veterans	Veteran Percentage of
<u>YEAR</u> 1941	Population (millions)	(Millions)	Male Population
1941	45.9	4.3	9.4
1945	50.0	6.5	13.0
1955	54.0	21.8	40.4
1965	60.1	25.3	42.1
1975	70.4	29.5	41.9
1985	82.7	26.6	32.2
1998	96.3	23.9	24.8

The decline in military veterans has a more severe impact than does the decline in congressional experience. The decline in veterans has a significant impact on society as a whole. The American populace begins to lose touch with its military and an obligation of service.

There is no clear relationship between military experience in Congress and how a Congress votes on key defense issues. In the area of budget and procurement, congressional oversight has grown dramatically during the last several decades. This oversight process has allowed many staffers to influence the procurement process. Additionally, the growth of Interest groups, Political Action Committees, and constituency groups all impact on how a member votes. So, the lack of military experience in Congress is a factor, but not as big as one might

initially envision. In some cases, military experience might have a negative impact on a Congressperson, depending on whether his/her military experience was positive or negative. The future challenge for the military leader is how to influence the Congress to support its military policies regarding force structure, modernization, readiness, and training. Congress must establish its priorities commensurate with the National Strategy before the military can establish a military strategy. To assist Congress in making their decisions, military leaders must be able to articulate the mix of threats, capabilities, readiness, and future preparedness.

V. Conclusions

The crossroads at which we stand is vitally important to our future. We have little time to decide on which road to take the road to better civil-military relations or to worse civil-military relations. If the path of better civil-military relations is not our choice the military culture will erode, the force will fail, and men and women will die -- may be not tomorrow, but in the near future. 18

During the Cold War everyone knew what the mission was and what the force structure, modernization, readiness, and training requirements should be. Since winning the Cold War, military and civilian leaders are no longer certain on what the military should look like. This uncertainty adds to an already strained civil-military relationship. Senior leaders must prioritize identifying threats, capabilities, readiness, and future preparedness so our civilian leaders can allocate resources appropriately. Military leaders must take the first steps to inculcate our civilian leaders into the process. Military leaders must take the offense in this situation.

Societal changes and a booming economy are playing havoc with recruiting and retention. In 1997, the Army missed its recruiting goal for the first time and first quarter retention 1999 recruiters missed there goal by 2300 recruits. To meet this

growing shortfall in recruits the services have increased bonuses and lowered their target's for high school graduates. Military leaders must understand these changes and articulate their needs to our civilian leaders. Congress must recognize that we do not have an all-volunteer force; rather, we have an all recruited force! There is a significant difference. Military and congressional leaders must insure that we don't develop a mercenary force.

The international environment is more complex than ever before in our nation's history. This complexity calls for clear and precise direction in our military policies. Civilian leaders must not shirk their responsibility to provide clear guidance on what our policy is and how the military is to be used to enforce that policy. Military leaders must recognize their requirements and be able to define them in terms our civilian leaders can understand. The military's inability to clearly identify its personnel and material readiness needs have added to the growing gap of misunderstanding.

All of these factors are small when seen individually, but when taken together have a catastrophic effect on civil-military operations. The pressure on both military and civilian leaders during this period of our history has never been greater. The decisions they will make in the next few years will determine if we will maintain our world leadership role or "fall to the

wayside" like the great world powers before us. Remember, being the last world superpower means we will be the next world superpower to fall. How long we maintain that superpower status revolves around the issue of how to balance civil-military between domestic and foreign policy.

"In the end, the dilemma of military institutions in a liberal society can only be resolved satisfactorily by military establishment that is different from but not distant from the society it serves." It may be the time to redefine the role of the armed forces. A former Army Chief of Staff, Harold K.

Johnson following two wars and a similar debate in the 1960s over how military forces should function, developed the following definition: "Armed forces exist to restore or create an environment of order or a climate of stability within which governments under law can function effectively." This statement does not say develop an Army to win the nation's wars, but given the current world environment it does seem to fit.

VI. Recommendations

Does the lack of military experience and understanding between the public and Congress have a negative impact on the military? The simple answer is yes. The difficulty comes when one tries to close the gap of understanding. This lack of a common reference effects the military in many ways. Changes in mission, society, and the international environment are causing soldiers and leaders concerns over force structure, modernization, readiness, and training. The following are recommendations to help close this gap of misunderstanding.

One recommendation involves educating both military and Congress. The military education must be developed just as any campaign plan is developed. It must include the roles of culture, leadership, and ethics in maintaining a military force. The education must start early at Military Academies, ROTC, and even in non-commissioned officers training. In other words, we must have an Information Operation plan to support the military education.

Congressional Staffers must be offered the opportunity to attend our military schools. They need to understand how we think and why we think the way we do. Congressmen and women are in office for a short period of time and may not be able to attend such courses, but their staffers could afford the time.

They could attend the Command and General Staff Colleges or the Senior Service Staff colleges. This type of education could go a long way in closing the gap of misunderstanding between Congress and the military.

Secondly, The Chief of Staff of each service could direct that every General Officer develop a one-to-one relationship with a member of Congress. The office of Congressional Liaison could help develop a plan that could identify a Congressmen's likes and dislikes, home state projects, and any special interests. This will enable the military to understand his representative better and begin to build relationships to close the gap of misunderstanding.

The third recommendation is to develop an information plan for the general public. The Army's Public Affairs Officer is always suggesting that officer should go out and tell our good news story. Most officers agree that is important, but we need to ensure the stories are coordinated with what the Army wants to show. Plus, most of the officers in the field are fully occupied with other duties. The PAO must develop good news stores and provide them to commanders. This does several things. First, it ensures the right story is being told; secondly, it makes it easier on the commanders in the field.

Along the lines of aligning generals with congressional leaders, the Army can require unit commanders to align

themselves with Veteran organizations such as Veterans of Foreign Wars, or the American Legion. These organizations are in every community and provide a good way to keep in touch with the public as well as our veterans.

The fourth and the most important recommendation would be to involve Congress in the development of National Military Strategy early in the process. The current process does not fully integrate Congress into the strategy development except for final review. At that time, if Congress does not agree with the strategy it will not fund/support it. It would seem smarter to bring them into the process earlier and make them part of the strategic process, thereby making them more willing to fund the strategy.

Lastly, Congress could eliminate the "double dipping" restrictions on military retires that would allow them to work with National Guard and Reserve units across the country. They could be used to educate and provide institutional training taking advantage of then expertise and gain more from their expertise.²¹

(word count 5,609)

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